



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of : **Confirmation No. 7014**
Akira TANAKA et al. : Docket No. 2001_1686A
Serial No. 09/987,383 : Group Art Unit 2836
Filed November 14, 2001 : Examiner D. Nguyen

POWER SUPPLY APPARATUS FOR
SUPPLYING ELECTRIC POWER TO
SUBSTRATE CARRIER CONTAINER

THE COMMISSIONER IS AUTHORIZED
TO CHARGE ANY DEFICIENCY IN THE
FEES FOR THIS PAPER TO DEPOSIT
ACCOUNT NO. 23-0975

RESPONSE

Assistant Commissioner for Patents,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

This is in response to the Office Action dated April 10, 2003. In view of the following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In item 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,446,806) in view of Machida et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The present invention, as defined in claim 1, requires, *inter alia*, a movable power supply connector provided on said body; and a control mechanism for bringing said power supply connector into contact with a charging terminal of the substrate carrier container. Similarly, claim 4 requires, *inter alia*, a movable power supply connector provided on said

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body; and a control mechanism for bringing said power supply connector into contact with a power supply terminal of the substrate carrier container.

Independent claim 7 is directed to a method of supplying electric power to a substrate carrier container, and requires, *inter alia*, the steps of moving a power supply connector provided on said body so as to bring said power supply connector into contact with a charging terminal of said substrate carrier container; charging said rechargeable cell in said substrate carrier container; and returning said power supply connector to an original position thereof after said rechargeable cell is charged. Similarly, independent claim 8 recites moving a power supply connector, provided on said body, to bring said power supply connector into contact with a power supply terminal of said substrate carrier container; supplying electric power to said electrical component; and returning said power supply connector to an original position thereof after the electric power is supplied to said electrical component.

As discussed in the previous response, Ohori discloses a transportation container and a method of opening and closing a lid 9 of the container. The lid includes a front retainer 11 having a pair of holding supports 13. As shown in Fig. 4, the holding supports 13 are provided with a plurality of support grooves 16 for supporting semiconductor wafers W so as to protect the semiconductor wafers W from friction, contamination, impact and vibration during transportation. Ohori also discloses a carrier unit 50 having a transportation mechanism 60 for moving a mounting base 64 back and forth between an operating region 61 and a supply/discharge region 62. When the container body 1 is

mounted on the mounting base 64, a detector on the mounting base detects the container body, whereupon the opening and closing device for the lid 9 starts to operate in accordance with a predetermined program.

A careful review of the Ohori container indicates that the container body 1 does not have any electric device that would require a supply of electric power. Accordingly, the body (mounting base 64) of Ohori does not include a moveable power supply connector, or a control mechanism for bringing the connector into contact with a charging terminal of the container.

In the rejection, the Examiner takes the position that Ohori discloses a "*movable power supply connector (70 shown in fig. 16)*", and a "*control mechanism (60)*".

However, in Ohori, the reference number 70 represents a positioning pin, which is clearly not a power supply connector, as suggested by the Examiner. As described in col. 14, lines 34-41 of Ohori, a plurality of position pins 70 serve to position the container body 1 on the mounting base 64. Therefore, a "power supply connector provided on the body", which is recited in each of independent claims 1 and 4, is clearly not disclosed or suggested by the Ohori reference.

Further, with regard to independent claims 7 and 8, since the Ohmori mounting base 64 does not include a power supply connector and the container body 1 does not include an electric device, it is submitted that the Ohmori reference does not disclose or suggest any of the above-identified limitations of claims 7 and 8.

Further, the Examiner applies **Machida** to teach a rechargeable cell. However, Machida does not disclose or suggest the limitations which are omitted in the disclosure of Ohori. Therefore, the collective teachings of Ohori and Machida do not disclose or suggest a control mechanism or a movable power supply connector on the body of a power supply apparatus. Accordingly, it is submitted that independent claims 1, 4, 7 and 8, along with their respective dependent claims, are clearly allowable over the prior art record.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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